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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

An early morning television course in elementary French is described. The course is conducted primarily in French and builds from zero knowledge, teaching a small high-utility vocabulary. Intake of vocabulary and structure is gently graded in sentences made understandable by means of picture-situations. Each lesson consists of the film lesson of the week, live application of vocabulary and structure, and one or more earlier film lessons as review.

The relation of the program to the text, French Through Pictures, is explained. Each film lesson presents a chain of twenty to thirty related sentences pictorially explained. The first twelve lessons follow the pocket book self-teaching text exactly, except that they develop the pictorial interpretation more fully. After the first twelve lessons, original sequences are used; they enable mastery of the vocabulary and structure contained in the book by applying them in a range of new situations which hold the student's interest. Lesson procedure is also described, as well as a listing and description of such aids to study as the self-help pocket book, recordings of the parent text spaced for sentence-by-sentence imitation of a native voice speech model, filmstrips for classroom use, and a packaged film course.

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FRENCH THROUGH TELEVISION

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The television course in Elementary French given over Channel 2, WGBH-TV, Boston, the Lowell Institute Cooperative Broadcasting Council, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 6 - 6:30, is conducted in the language of instruction except for announcements and simple suggestions to viewers from time to time as to how to make use of the material about to be shown. It builds from zero knowledge of French and teaches a small high-utility vocabulary of well under a thousand words recurring in the essential sentence forms of the language. Intake of vocabulary and structure is gently graded in sentences made understandable by means of picture-situations.

Program Design

Each lesson divides into three parts:

a. The film lesson of the week.
b. Live application of vocabulary and structure.
c. One or more earlier film lessons as review.

Usually the new lesson opens the program; occasionally the review comes first. Live action of five to ten minutes, sometimes with an introductory French song, always divides the two stick figure instructional sequences. Live action programs utilize pantomime, dialogue, narrative, description, etc., with native voices, at the vocabulary and structure level of the film lesson of the week.

Relation of Program to text FRENCH THROUGH PICTURES

Each film lesson presents a chain of twenty to thirty related sentences pictorially explained. The first twelve lessons follow the Pocket Book self-teaching text exactly, except that they develop the pictorial interpretation more fully, supplying simple animation where useful. Beginners who purchase the book gain confidence and enjoy a feeling of security by being able to read over between viewings the four or five pages used for a film lesson. However, the film course is self-supporting for viewers not in possession of the text.

After the first twelve lessons, the stick figure film lessons provide original sequences, each one of which advances the new vocabulary and structure of the next four or five pages of the text by means of original sequences designed for film only, spoken by a native voice and made clear through pictures. The new sequences make for active mastery of the vocabulary and structure contained in the book by applying them in a range of new situations which hold the interest of the student and discourage mere rote memorizing. A viewer who follows the film lesson with the help of its picture-commentary finds that he can pronounce and understand the language of the section of the text on which it is based. If he then works problem exercises in the work book lessons of the same level, he masters the written forms which he is studying without recourse to grammar rules. Add to this the reminder that the book and film sequences are self-reviewing, the essential structure words of the language coming back again and again in different sentences, and it will become evident that intensive cultivation of a nucleus of the language is assured.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY - U.S.C.

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Lesson Procedure

Each film lesson, which consists of a two- to four-minute chain of related sentences-in-situations, is shown first with oral utterances accompanying the pictures on the screen; these are spaced for audience repetition sentence by sentence.

After one or two viewings with sound alone, the captions appear in print below each picture in turn, as visual support and as a signal for the audience to repeat each sentence. Intervals are exactly timed to permit repetition at the speed and with the rhythm of the model. The captioned story may be repeated as desired.

By the third day of the showing of a new lesson, the testing version of the film is usually introduced. This presents each picture first, with an interval of silence long enough to induce viewers to speak a sentence that will give its meaning. The caption then appears, with a native voice saying the sentence first linked with the picture. Though variants of the sentence, and often additional sentences, may be offered by the viewer as pictures become more complicated, this model answer leaves the learner with a correct native utterance in his eye and ear, to which he can compare his own attempt if he has managed to make one.

The live dialogues and pantomimes, with commentary, which then take up the new structure and vocabulary items provide additional native voices and as much demonstration as can be designed to display meaning in the sentences used. These live programs require trained native speakers and skilled production. They are being filmed for wider use on television and in classrooms.

A review film may utilize all sound, all caption, or the testing "cap-sound" version of one or more back films for further study. Attending to these review films, even when a viewer does not participate actively by imitating the voice, trains the ear, develops comprehension, and increases familiarity with written forms. Practice in speaking the sentences after the model can be of great value. Viewers have leisure to compare sentence parts with one another and see how meaning and structure elements are related.

Study Resources of FRENCH THROUGH TELEVISION

French through Television may be followed as a self-contained course by beginners of any age as well as by students who wish to brush up their knowledge of French or improve their pronunciation. Rapid learners and advanced students sometimes keep up by viewing one day a week, though there is always variety enough to invite more frequent viewing. Beginners usually try to follow three or at least two weekly sessions. Several have informed the station of uninterrupted viewing since September 3, 1955.

Aids to Study

An unusual feature of French through Television is the self-help pocket text available anywhere to serious viewers who want to implement their screen learning. The first fifty pages of the parent text gives the script of the early stick figure lessons exactly, with picture commentary to make study possible without recourse to translation. Later pages use the same vocabulary and structure as the film lessons with a variety of illustration and anecdote that makes for full comprehension. A second pocket volume, A First Work Book of French, allows the viewer to test his growing knowledge of the new language step by step. Recordings of the parent text spaced for sentence-by-sentence imitation of a native voice speech model are also obtainable, as are filmstrips for classroom use. Further information on texts and teaching aids is available from Language Research Inc. 13 Kirkland Street, Cambridge 38, Mass. and from Educational Services, 1730 Eye Street N.W., Washington 6, D.C. where the following may be obtained:

1. French through Pictures (Pocket Book, Cardinal Edition C-78. 35¢)

2. A First Workbook of French (Pocket Book, Cardinal Edition C-259. 35¢)

3. Telavix Recordings, French through Pictures, Series I $10.00
   (L.P. 33 1/3 rpm spaced for sentence repetition)

4. a) Film Strips Series 1. French through Pictures $25.00
   12 strips: pages 1-112 French through Pictures
   alternating captioned and captionless frames for:-
   (1) Oral use with or without synchronized recordings
   (2) Reading
   (3) Free composition

   b) Film Strips Series 2 French through Pictures $25.00
   12 strips: pages 122-242 French through Pictures
   alternating captioned and captionless frames

A teaching guide to the Language through Pictures Series, now under revision, will be available in May, 1958.

Packaged Film Courses

1. The packaged film course of 48 half-hour reels teaching the French of French through Pictures pages 1-112 can be supplied for classroom use at special educational rates.

2. Cartoon sequences from this series, consisting of 24 ten-minute reels, can be purchased separately. They comprise 24 stick figure film lessons, using sound, captioned and test-film sequences and are graded for use with French through Pictures, pages 1-112.

3. Separate purchase may also be made of any or all of the 48 live supporting sequences for use with the text. Live action films average 5-6 minutes each.